

## 2 - Richie Tozier Faces his Fears by DeTrashmouth

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**Summary:** Part 2; Another misadventure in '89, this time Richie's fears about being hunted down by The Bowers Gang are quickly side swiped when that monstrous Paul Bunyan statue comes to life and attacks him.

## 2 - Richie Tozier Faces his Fears

*"I must be the exception that proves the rule, Big Bill."*

*"Are you sure there was nothing, Richie? Nothing at all?"*

Richie had been killing another boring day at the Arcade, playing Street Fighter and pretending the character that his own was beating, was in fact his friend - old friend now, Bill Denbrough. Every time he punched the character in the face, Richie was imagining it was him striking Bill, much the way he'd struck him that day they went to Neibolt Street. He was winning, too. He'd gotten pretty good with all the time and practice, and money he'd put into this game and was determined eventually get his initials at the very top for the highest score.

But his fun had come to an abrupt end when Richie had been suddenly startled to see none other than Henry Bowers, Victor Criss, and Belch emerge from the theater.

Oh, shit... He hoped he wouldn't be noticed, but was spotted when Henry looked into the arcade; so did Belch, after he gave Vic a shove.

"Well what the fuck do you know about this," Henry said. "Richie Fuckin' Tozier, one of the rock-throwers! Where's your loser friends at, asshole?"

Shit, indeed.

"My friends are outside -" Richie tried to say as he backed away from the game, trying to get to the door.

"Oooh, his friends are outside, Henry!" Victor squealed in a mockingly high-pitched voice. Henry didn't grin, though, he had a look full of rage in his eyes.

Richie backed up and tried to call out for help, but all that he could manage were a bunch of stammering sounds, like Bill sometimes made when he stuttered. Richie realized all at once that he was truly alone, and this is why Beverly had been right; 'This is what IT wants, IT wants to divide us. We we're all together when we hurt it, that's

why we're still alive!

Not just about the clown, but just being together in general. Now here Richie was, face to face with who might have been Pennywise Jr. for all he cared. Henry was just as crazy as his fucking father, and after the rock fight, he looked like he may have been even crazier.

"I don't mind taking you one by one. Come here, you little four-eyed fuck!"

Victor stood beside Henry; Belch trailed behind them, smiling in a porky vacant way.

"Come on, fuckface!" Henry said. "You remember what you said to me that day? Let's talk about that, huh. What was it? Something about blowing my dad? Is that what the fuck you said to me?"

Fuck. Fuck. FUCK!

Henry darted forward and made to grab him. Richie whirled around to make a get away, but they were surrounding him like sharks.

"Got any rocks on you?" Henry asked, advancing across the distance between them.

"Fuck off-" Richie said, trembling. But at that moment, Henry's hand shot out incredibly fast, and smacked Richie's cheek with a blunt force. Richie's head rocked from the impact.

"Ahh!" Richie tried to turn, but Henry lashed out again before he could, and this time hitting his other cheek, both of which would be swollen and have matching bruises now.

'Don't cry,' Richie thought in that instance. 'That's what they want. Don't fucking cry.'

Belch stepped forward and gave Richie a hard open-handed push, Richie stumbled and then lost his balance completely and landed onto Vic, who began laughing like a hyena and slapping at his stomach, giving his skin a harsh burn. Richie yelped in pain as he turned towards the door to get the hell out of there, but only ran face-first into Bowers himself.

"Don't got any rocks now, do ya rock-man?" Henry raved down at him, and Richie was more frightened by Henry's eyes than he was by the pain he was feeling from the others now. Henry was out for blood, his blood, all the losers' blood. "You wanna throw rocks, Tozier? Huh?!" Bowers made a move on him, just as Belch and Victor did from the other sides. Richie thought fast and with no where to go, simply ducked to the ground. The result, was that the three of them collided into each other and tumbled to the ground like bowling pins.

With not a moment to spare, Richie crawled hurriedly away from them and got to his feet, hauling ass towards the door. But of course, being Richie, the 'Trashmouth,' he had to turn around to get one last word in, and a certain finger gesture.

"Suck my sack, you bunch'a fuckin' stooges!"

"YOU'RE FUCKING DEAD!" Henry screamed with a furious hatred for this particular loser.

Uh oh.

Just as fast as Richie fled from the arcade, Henry and his goons were up and giving chase like bats out of Hell. Richie ran for his literal life and turned to run across the street. He was almost struck by several cars as he made his grand escape, passing the alley with the infamous Bradley Gang mural as the three of them sprawled out of the arcade.

"Belch, get the fucking car, we're going to kill this son of a bitch!" Henry demanded as Belch ran his fat ass into the parking lot, leaving the other two to scope out where Richie had ran to.

Unfortunately, he hadn't been as fast as he hoped, and was spotted just as he'd turned the corner.

"There!" Victor cried out, pointing across the street. "Tozier!" "Let's fucking get him!" Henry screamed as the two gave chase in his direction.

Belch had hopped into his car, and started it up as Iron Maiden's classic hit blared thunderously. Richie had just about made it out the other side of the alley, by the butcher shop when he saw the blue

Trans Am coming flying straight at him.

*- NIGHT WAS BLACK, WAS NO USE HOLDING BACK!  
CAUSE I JUST HAD TO SEE, WAS SOMEONE WATCHING ME?!  
IN THE MIST, DARK FIGURES MOVE - AND - TWIST!  
WAS ALL THIS FOR REAL, OR JUST SOME KIND OF HELL?!*

"OH SHIT-!"

Richie turned to run back down the alley, but even faster now, Henry and Vic were giving chase and closing in. He had no where to go but straight to the great beyond. But he wasn't going to become Bowers' first real victim, not today.

Despite being so scrawny, Richie Tozier was a fast little fuck, even Bowers had to admit that, begrudgingly so. He managed to dodge Henry's advance and hooked a swift left around the alley's corner, nicking his shoulder as he crashed into the side of the brick wall and hollering as he did so. But he wasn't dead yet.

*'Tis but a flesh wound!*" Richie thought to himself, and kept running.

Bowers and Vic got to the edge of the alley, and quickly hopped into Belch's car.

"Move your fucking ass!" Henry screamed at Belch, and the car peeled out, driving down the road as Richie ran down the sidewalk.

He ran faster than he ever had in his life, and figured its because he thought it might be the last thing he'd ever do. And just up ahead, he thought he saw his saving grace in the Freese's Department Store.

Damn well near winded to the point of fainting at that point, Richie kept telling himself to just go a little more, a little bit further. He could make it to the store, and if he did, he would be safe. They wouldn't dare chase him into there. And through the struggle, he'd surprised even himself when he managed to make it.

But Bowers was a determined, crazy son of a bitch. Just as fast as Richie had gotten into the store, holding his wounded shoulder and catching his breath, he peeked out the glass door and saw the three of them had parked crooked in the lot and were still coming for him.

"Jesus, these assholes just don't quit ..." Richie gasped, and turned to make his way through the store.

But Henry and his goons had been right behind him, not letting up by a long shot. Richie ran through the store and found himself almost slipping as his shoes skidded through a puddle on the floor. As if by some kind of miracle, the overhead pipes right by the display of stuffed plushie turtles had been dripping all day and made quite a mess upon the store's marble floor. Mr Fazio, the manager of Freese's, ordered his workers to keep the water mopped up and for what it was worth, they'd been cleaning it on and off all day. But it was no use, and eventually they just put up a CAUTION! WET FLOOR! sign on a little easel.

Richie hadn't fallen, but Henry and the others weren't so lucky. They were moving too fast, too easily distracted in sheer irony of focusing so intently on ending that Trashmouth's life. Looking back over his hurt shoulder, he heard a loud thud and saw that Henry had slipped in the puddle, and fallen to the floor so damn hard, with Belch landing on him and Vic going down last.

Before Richie could stop it his mouth from doing what it did best, he called out; "Way to go, banana-heels!" Smirking, he seized the opportunity to hurry through the store and exit out the back, finally getting the fuck away from the madness. But not before he heard Henry's final battle-cry.

"You're fucking dead, Trashmouth!" Henry called out, as serious as a heart attack. "You're so dead they're gonna have to bury you twice!"

And so at long last, Richie had escaped an early demise. He'd been beat, but not beaten, and with that he considered himself rather accomplished. Richie began his long trek home, trying to ignore the burning stings from all the wounds he had gotten with his little encounter with Bowers that day. Half way home, he decided to take a rest in front of City Center, where he'd spent the 4th of July with his then-best friends, his only friends.

He was utterly fucking spent. He'd just gotten down to a bench just to the left of the Paul Bunyan statue, when he collapsed and thought about how good a cold glass of iced water would be right about now.

Which made him chuckle, because he never drank water. He was strictly a soda-pop kinda kid. But right now? Water sounded so fucking good.

After just a bit of a rest to collect his bearings, Richie would get up and head home for the day. But for now, it just felt too good to rest up in the afternoon sun. There were some clouds gathering in the distance and he thought it might rain, but for now, he'd enjoy the weather as well as he could.

Richie let out a good-hearty yawn, and felt the feeling of vertigo slowly creeping in. Falling asleep now would be bad, he knew that. Bowers and... well, other threats were still out there. They would always be there. He was only ever truly safe in his home, his room, or with his friends ... Except he didn't have friends anymore. Just Stanley, and Eddie, who he barely saw as it was.

This thought hurt him ever so slightly, but he was still so pissed at Bill, and Beverly. Fuck those losers. He'd be just as happy to move away and never see any of them again. And he would, one day. He promised himself that. One day, indeed, he would move out to California and become famous, and finally have people appreciate his comedic talents.

*One day...*

Thinking of this, Richie breathed slowly and let his head fall onto his remaining good shoulder, and his eyes got heavy. He would only close them for a moment, he told himself. Just a few seconds...

That's when he suddenly felt warm swash of air into his face. It blew his hair back from his forehead and woke him the hell up in an instant. What the fuck was that?

When Richie opened his eyes looked up, he found himself frozen completely solid as that hideous Paul Bunyan statue was gone now. Vanished. Was David Copperfield in town or something... No, he would never come to Derry.

Richie heard the lowest roar of a giant's breath just off to his right, and gulped, slowly turning to see his fear had come true. Paul's huge

plastic face was right there! Bigger than Richie had ever imagined it to be from all the times he'd grimace when he passed the damn thing. The stature was bending down, looking at him fiercely and yet grinning, although it didn't exactly look like Paul Bunyan anymore. Its body was beginning to tear apart as it got in motion. It had tufts of red-orange hair stuck out of its head, its nose was now round and red. Its eyes were glowing bright yellow, no - golden yellow, with a hint of orange to them.

The statue stood up all at once and lifted the axe up, moving so fast and yet seemingly in a form of slow motion, and with that, the blunt end of the axe head crushed a trench in the concrete of the sidewalk. He was still grinning, but there was nothing cheery about it now. From between gigantic, rigged fangs, a smell flew from its breath that reminded Richie of dead, rotten animals, like road kill left out in the sun to bake.

**"YOU'RE FUCKING DEAD, TRASHMOUTH."** The giant roared in a husky, rumbling voice, quoting Bowers. Its voice caused everything to rumble like some kind of earthquake all around him. **"YOU'RE SOOO DEAD THEY'RE GONNA HAVE TO BURY YOU TWICE! HEEEEHEHEURHURHURHURHURHUR DEE HURRRR!"**

The giant began to laugh as it ripped its axe and pulled it out of the crater in what was left of sidewalk. As the axe began to rise into the air, it made a low but lethal hissing sound.

Ssssswwiiiiiiisshhhhh...

Richie suddenly understood that the giant meant to split him right down the middle. But was paralyzed in fear.

**"IS ALL THIS FOR REAL,"** the giant had rumbled, quoting the lyrics to the Iron Maiden song Richie had heard earlier. **"OR JUST SOME KIND OF HELL?!"**

As the axe rose up and slowed in motion, in his mind, Richie thought he heard an oldies song playing; The Dovells 'Bristol Stomp.'

*The kids in Bristol are sharp as a pistol -  
When they do the Bristol Stomp!*

*Really somethin' when they join in jumpin  
When they do the Bristol Stomp!*

*Whoa, oh!*

*They start spinnin every Friday night  
They dance the greatest and they do it right!  
Well it's the latest, it's the greatest sight, to see!  
The kids in Bristol are sharp as a pistol - Whoa, oh!*

*When they do the Bristol Stomp! Whoa, oh!  
Really somethin' when they join in jumpin  
When they do the Bristol Stomp! Whoa, oh!*

He tried to scream but his mouth had betrayed him, he couldn't make a sound. Richie rolled off the bench and onto the raked ground, just as the giants grin had become more sinister. Its blood-red lips were pulled back and ripping, looking distorted and wicked.

The blade of the axe struck the bench where Richie had been only an instant before. The edge was so sharp that there was almost no sound at all, but the bench was sheared instantly in two.

Richie was on his back. Still trying to scream. Paul, towering above him, looking down at him with eyes the size of manhole covers; there was Paul, looking down at one small boy cowering on the gravel.

The giant took a step toward him. Richie felt the ground shudder when the black boot came down. Gravel spumed up in a cloud. Richie rolled over and staggered to his feet. His legs were already trying to run before he up and able and as a result he fell flat on his face, getting the wind knocked out of him for the second time in one day. God, he couldn't keep this shit up. He thought Bowers had been scary, but this, this thing was unreal. This was a real fucking monster.

Wheezing for air, momentarily wondering if this is how Eds felt all the time, Richie scrambled to get to his feet and ran as fast as he could. His glasses flew wildly from left to right as he slammed them to his face so hard he was sure he'd have two black eyes, and was lucky not to have broken them. He could just hear his mother now,

nagging him in the back of his mind: 'Honestly, Richie, do you think there's a glasses-tree somewhere and we can just pull off a new pair of spectacles for you whenever you break a pair?'

As he lay on the ground awaiting certain death, he could hear that awful persistent whisper of ol' Paul pulling his axe up again.

Ssssswwiiiiiiisshhhhh...

Richie ran out of Paul's monstrous shadow and got into sunlight once again, before he fell again onto the ground. Looking up, Richie caught one glance of the giant; It was going in for the kill.

Oh fuck...

He shut his eyes tightly and hugged his knees, feeling as if this was it. This is how his life would end. With nothing left to do, he began chanting and ; "IT ISN'T REAL IT ISN'T REAL IT ISN'T REAL!"

Richie waited to be sliced, or possibly smashed to death, but as he screamed the words, he had convinced himself it truly wasn't real, none of this was happening. It couldn't. His fear was nonsense. When he didn't feel himself being split in two, he at last risked opening his eyes and saw... Nothing.

The statue of Paul Bunyan was back standing on its pedestal where it always stood, axe on its shoulder. 'Just a statue... Just a fucking statue,' Richie thought.

The bench that had been sheared in two was whole again, and the gravel where Tall Paul had planted his huge foot back to normal, safe for the scuffed spot where Richie had fallen. There were no giant footprints in the ground, no axe-slashes in the concrete. No evidence that any of that had transpired at all.

"Shit," Richie gasped, trying to find his breath as he began chuckling a little. Ol' Paul had gotten off a good one... And managed to cause him to lose control of his bodily fluids. Looking down at his faded blue jeans now, the spot around his crotch and thighs was a certain darker shade of blue. Warm and soiled.

Groaning, Richie picked himself up and brushed himself off, taking a

quick glance around to see if anyone was watching .. But more honestly? He feared that fucking clown. And that statue. And Bowers. Most of all, though, he realized he feared being alone most.

That, and getting a rash from these watered down jeans. Richie needed to rush home and change, pronto.

Fuck, he couldn't wait to get out of Derry.

One day...